

GROUND COVER

NEWS AND SOLUTIONS FROM THE GROUND UP

MAY 2011

VOLUME TWO

ISSUE FOUR

\$1

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Making time for mom, and for others



by Susan Beckett
Publisher

When I was very young, I gifted my mom with homemade potholders that I loved making and she seemed to love getting. Soon, Mother's Day became an occasion where I struggled to find an appropriate gift and get it to my mother on the right day.

As a young mother, I sometimes resented having "my" day usurped by family gatherings centered around

an older generation that was not actively engaged in the daily demands of mothering. And then, too late, I learned that there were precious few years between the time my kids were independent and when their grandmothers were gone.

Caught up in the demands of everyday life, visiting had taken on the specter of another thing to fit in; less time I'd have for myself. What did I do instead that would have been left undone? It's telling that I can't recall anything of significance.

I wonder how it would have been if I had lived nearby instead of 500 miles away. Would I have made time for regular dinners with my parents? Would they have been more of a part of my everyday life?

As the nature of our relationship shifted to my mother relying on me more than I relied her, my extended visits increased in frequency and I marveled at how much I enjoyed spending time with her, just going through the daily chores of life together. Chatting while making dinner, discussing a book or

lecture, teaching her how to solve a Sudoku puzzle as she had taught me crossword puzzles so long ago - these moments seem so precious now.

Conflicted between maintaining relationships and accomplishing the tasks at hand, the immediateness of the tasks pull me in that direction.

And as I push off visits with close friends and family until a more convenient time, I wonder if I'll repeat this pattern forever or accept this latest gift from my mother.

Even when your mind goes, you still have your memories



by Laurie Lounsbury
Editor

A few years before my mother's death, we kids packed her entire life into two drawers of an old bedroom dresser.

Two drawers.

Eighty-six years of living, 42 years of a happy marriage, three children, seven grandchildren, countless friends, relatives weddings, parties, family vacations - in the end, it was all neatly tucked into two dresser drawers.

My mother had been living independently in a retirement complex, but a fall and ensuing broken hip necessitated her move to a nursing home.

We three siblings converged in Chicago to handle the dreaded task of divvying up her lifelong possessions. We took turns picking items from my mother's collection of furniture and memorabilia.

Our picks were very revealing about our memories.

My brother wanted to waste one of his picks on an unattractive black trash can, upon which my mother had decouped an American Eagle when decouping was all the rage.

"Just take it Ben, you don't have to waste a pick on a trash can," we told him. But he insisted, saying that the can brought back memories of us all together in our family room, tossing pieces of construction paper Christmas tree garlands into the can when one of us made a mistake.

I became equally nostalgic and wasted a turn on a spectacularly ugly mint green vinyl chair that sat in the corner of my mother's bedroom. My sister had already put it in the pile to go into the Dumpster. With a certain amount of embarrassment, I explained to my older siblings that I used to sit in that chair and listen to my mother's stories of her youth while she sewed hems in dresses handed down from my sister to me.

When all the picking and choosing was

done, we shipped our new belongings to our homes. Then I called Mom to tell her that her possessions had found good homes.

"I took the mint green vinyl chair, Mom, and I put it in my bedroom," I told her. I thought this would give her great pleasure.

"You're mistaken," she said. "I never owned a mint green vinyl chair."

Bear in mind, conversations with my mother had become twisty trips down Memory-Challenged Lane.

"Yeah you did Mom, I used to sit in that chair and you'd tell me stories of when you were little."

"I remember telling you stories, but no, I don't remember any green vinyl chair. Why on earth would I own a mint green vinyl chair?"

That's a question I often asked myself.

"Martha took your double brass bed for Heidi, since she's going to be married soon. It will be your first granddaughter's first wedding bed."

"Oh, I'm so happy for Heidi, I think her young man is wonderful," Mom said.

"Ben chose that little hand-painted picture of Dad with his mom when he was a baby."

"Oh, your dad was so precious in that picture..."

"And I took the picture of you that you had professionally done for your 50th birthday. It's a really good picture of you."

"Ahh yes, I remember that picture," she said. "You were just a little girl when that was taken. You were aging

me fast, so I decided I'd better get a good picture taken while I still had the chance."

Mom's very favorite photo albums rested safely in the two top dresser drawers in her nursing home room, along with bits of jewelry our dad gave her over the years.

We put her gorgeous, black and white wedding photo on the wall of her new room. She looked at it every day, and we assumed she was remembering a very happy day when she started her married life with Dad.

One of my sister's friends who visited mom saw that wedding photo and remarked how beautiful the bride was.

"Yes, my daughter Martha was a beautiful bride, wasn't she? Weren't you one of her bridesmaids, dear?"

Oh well. A bride is a bride. And we Lounsbury women do look alike.

A nurse came in and looked at the picture of my daughter Lexi hanging next to the wedding picture.

"What a darling child," she told Mom.

"Yes, but what a rascal that Laurie is! Just look at the twinkle in her eye. She's going to be a handful when she grows up."

Right premonition, wrong kid.

It became obvious that it is the memories gathered, not the objects owned, that ultimately give people the greatest pleasure in life. And even if the memories get tangled up, as long as they're good ones, does it matter?

Happy Mother's Day, Mom, and thanks for the many happy memories. Especially the ones I can remember.

GROUNDCOVERNEWS

MISSION:

Groundcover News exists to create opportunity and a voice for low-income people while taking action to end homelessness and poverty.

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Wisdom and Wonder in a Web

Rev. Dr. Martha Brunell
Pastor, Bethlehem United Church
of Christ

Several Septembers ago I was out and about in Ludington, Michigan early one Sunday morning. It was sunrise. I was trying to get a good picture of a great blue heron. They are difficult to track without a long lens. Herons are shy, alert, and quick to rise on their mighty wings. Sure enough I found the heron but again wasn't fast enough to frame out my photo. Instead, as I crossed an old bridge over the Lincoln River, I saw a magical spider web. I could easily have missed the web. It was small in scale compared to a great blue heron. However, morning dew

lined the filaments of this web, and the ascending sun made them sparkle. The simple science of the web took my breath away. Later, when I studied my pictures, I realized that portions of the web resembled the thinnest rainbows I had ever glimpsed, shimmering with the colors of light captured in the water. I keep a copy of that web photo close by at home, still marveling at how it is shot through with rainbows. It reminds me to slow down, open up all my senses, and be prepared for what any day may deliver.

A few weeks ago I was studying another lovely web. This time it wasn't in a photo of mine. I was talking with a photographer in her New Buffalo

studio. She frequently photographs the webs in the fields behind her old house. These too are web photos full of water and light. When her photos are enlarged significantly, one can see that the droplets of water in those webs act like any puddle or pond. They reflect what is around them. Susan, the photographer, says she is still surprised to see herself emerge in the reflection when the web droplets are magnified enough.

The earth is awakening again, and temperatures are finally warming in Michigan. Many of us are already outside more than we have been in months. Tapping the wisdom and wonder of two webs I have pondered,

I suggest that we all slow down, open up our senses, and be prepared for what any day may deliver. Where do we see ourselves reflected in the wide lens of the world around us? In what ordinary corners are we startled by the modest connections that bind us to our natural surroundings? What tiny piece of beauty are we aware of today, perhaps a piece that we have walked by before? How do we feel and how do our physical beings react when we start to appreciate what is really out there, hidden in plain sight.

In the immediate wake of Earth Day 2011, (April 22) this is an uncomplicated daily habit that's easy to begin. Try it out soon.

A Perfect Ten

by Rissa Haynes
Groundcover Vendor

The number 10 has taken on some significant meanings. In various competitions, the number 10 is the perfect score; in the Bible it is the number for completion; for me it has been astonishingly a sign of great compassion, love and gracious generosity.

My past sales motivators have suggested we never give up until after the 10th "No Thank You." This has proven to be a very helpful tip for "sticking and staying" while working "my corner" in front of the Food Coop in Kerry Town. Surprisingly, though, I've never had to count all the way up to 10 before some compassionate patron would come to buy a Groundcover newspaper. Some people even buy several copies of the same issue, just to help my business.

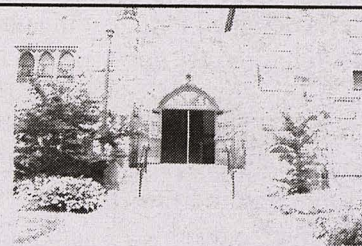
On one occasion, I was working a concert at the "churple" -- an Episcopal Church & Jewish Temple -- and several circumstantial obstacles had prevented my timely arrival. Cold, tattered and worn, I set up my vending area late. After the 9th no thank you passed by, another sweet, young lady approached me with outstretched arms and a \$10 bill in her palm. As I looked up into her eyes to ask how many papers she wanted to buy, I recognized her as a former Groundcover vendor. She was attending the concert before moving out of town. "This is for you," she said warmly with a smile. We hugged before she went into the churple. OH WHAT BROTHERLY LOVE!

On the first Saturday and Sunday of each month, a group of us vendors sell papers at St. Francis Catholic Church. The parishioners there have consistently been very gracious and generous in their support of our Groundcover venture. Not only are we greeted by assigned volunteers who truly make me feel welcome, but also the members of the congregation donate generously to our business.

I recall one Sunday feeling like the cripple who laid by the Pool of Bethesda (see story in Bible St. John

5:2ff), not being able to get into the pool fast enough for the healing, because others quicker than himself would get in before him. My mobility challenge had me in a similar position where the other vendors were greeting the members of the church before they got to my area. As I stood there having a bit of a "pity party," a sweet, young girl (probably a 4th or 5th-grader) came to me and gave me 10 dollars.

"We already have the paper," she said. "This is for you." Such gracious generosity made my heart and eyes swell with warm waters that healed my pity party and turned it into an attitude of gratitude.



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 May 6 & 7 ~ Fundraiser ~ Bandito's Mexican Restaurant
 May 14 ~ Saturday Worship ~ 5:15 pm
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an invitation to grow in spirit and serve with joy

DEAR WOMAN, HERE IS

by Pastor Robert Hoepner
Redeemer Lutheran Church

The Third of Jesus' Seven Words
 from the Cross:

"Dear woman, here is your son; here is your mother." (John 19:26-27)

What great compassion Jesus showed! There, in the midst of pain and anguish, enduring the mockery and shame, Jesus did not think of Himself, but instead He thought about His mother. He understood the pain she was suffering watching Him endure the pain and the injustice, for He was not only her son, but He was also the Son of God and her Savior too. Jesus knew what was piercing her heart. Therefore in full compliance with the Law, He repaid His mother; He honored His parent. He provided for her even from the cross.

No matter who we are, we are the child of a father and a mother. God could have multiplied people like bacteria, I suppose, or have them grow like mushrooms. But He didn't. Instead, He gave us fathers and mothers, requiring us to honor, serve, and obey them, and give them love and respect.

If Jesus, being fully God, honored His human mother, then we, too, should have compassion for our parents and walk in Jesus' footsteps.

Alternatives to Being Unhoused: Creativity and Vision Needed

by Karen Totten
Groundcover Contributor

Ann Arbor has an increasing number of homeless individuals, up from 4200 in 2008 to 4600 in 2010 according to the Shelter Association of Washtenaw County, as cited in an A2Politico article posted March 17, 2011 by Erika McNamara, Whitmore Lake resident and lawyer affiliated with MISSION (Michigan Itinerant Shelter System: Interdependent Out of Necessity).

As we know, shelters are not the complete answer. Shelters provide temporary housing for limited numbers but there are not enough beds available in Washtenaw County to meet the demand of all the unhoused, and the rules that govern shelter use prohibit some parts of the homeless population from partaking of their services.

So what can be done? Two creative solutions to unhoused people are presented below, to demonstrate that we need to start thinking in new [pick one] ways about how to find solutions to the needs of the homeless.

Dignity Village, a government sanctioned tent city in Portland, Oregon – the only one in the United States, according to Free Speech Radio News – has been operating for 10 years. Residents, about 60 or so, live in permanent small homes designed for individuals or couples (children are not allowed to live on site). The structures, originally tents, tee pees, light wooden shacks or other temporary shelters, are now fully enclosed; some feature straw bale construction with mud and straw surfacing and adobe-finished walls. The land is a donated city lot.

The encampment is in an area seven miles from downtown Portland. The site was first met with much protest by Dignity Village residents, but has worked out for the community which boasts a community garden, and a retail shop selling tenant-made jewelry and birdhouses.

Rules of the community are strict. No drugs or alcohol allowed. No theft, no violence. Everyone agrees to participate in community

activities such as tending the garden. There is a one-time-and-out policy – no exceptions.

This encampment functions similarly to Ann Arbor's Camp Take Notice in its rules and regulations, and its interdependent community-based organization. The difference is that Portland donated the land on which the camp rests and set up housing that by 2009 was compliant with city code for residences. These are functioning homes. In a city the size of Portland, or even Ann Arbor, 60 residences are not going to fill the need of the unhoused, but it is a start that does more than ignore the growing numbers without a place to live, and that acknowledges the dignity and worth of people who for varied reasons do not reside in currently available housing.

In March 2011, a group of three legislators from Seattle came to tour the encampment, according to Street Roots, the Portland area street newspaper. Seattle is considering a similar arrangement for camp-based housing.

The natural building movement might also hold some answers to issues of the unhoused. At the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota, joblessness, poverty, addiction and poor health come together with inadequate housing to create a very difficult situation for Native American people living on the remains of their native land.

According to House Alive!, 80 percent of the Lakota people are homeless and must rely on relatives during winter months when temperatures can drop to 30 below zero. The Lakota traditional way of life was disrupted by the arrival of the white settlers.

Lakota traditionally lived in teepees, following the buffalo herds and living from the land. As they were massacred and cleared off their original hunting grounds, they were forced to migrate to South Dakota reservations.

The situation worsened in the mid 20th century, as most people were by then living in tar paper shacks and mobile trailers. The government stepped in and started to build what they called "cluster houses," which are actually paper-thin and cheaply built. These ghettos fill quickly with more than one family per house—sometimes as many as 20 people at a time sharing a 2-bedroom house. Poverty is rampant. While some people do own land on the prairie, they have no means to build and move there. Adequate housing is badly needed.

House Alive! came to the reservation in 2010 to build a 2-bedroom straw bale house with composting toilet and solar power. This nonprofit group, based in southern Oregon, presents workshops on natural building and consults on natural design. The group has worked primarily in western U.S., but also has developed projects in Mexico, Guatemala, Panama, Jamaica and Spain. Pictures of the build can be seen at the House Alive! website listed at the bottom of this article.

This summer, another building project will begin on Pine Ridge for a family of the Oglala Sioux tribe, organized by New Jura Natural Building in collaboration with a reservation-based group called Sustainable Homestead Design. During July and August, builders will put up a 30-by-30-foot pallet house,

using shipping pallets, which are a huge waste material being widely used among the "green" building community.

The house will be insulated with light straw clay and have earthen plaster on interior and exterior walls, according to the Natural Building Network website. The floor will also be an earthen plastered application. Other "green" features will include a rain water catchment roof and gutter system to use for household needs, and a graywater-to-garden system using shower and sink runoff. There will be a composting toilet. The goal is to be finished before the winter months set in, which in South Dakota could be in September.

Two houses will not solve the needs of Native Americans in South Dakota. However, they are a start, especially as the projects involve local participation and skill-building workshops which bring work into the community and establish a skill set that can be drawn from in implementing new builds.

Please check out each of these projects at the following sites:

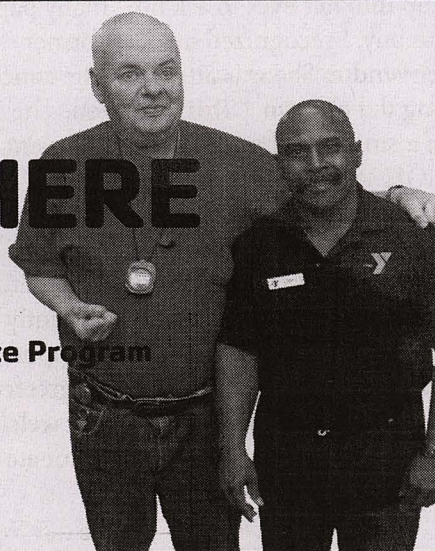
Dignity Village en.wikipedia.org/Dignity_Village
House Alive! housealive.org
New Jura Building newjurabuilding.info or nbnetwork.org/events

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Challenging social attitudes about mental illness

by Andrew Nixon
Groundcover Contributor

Jonathan was about ten when he began to display signs of mental illness.

Of course, nobody in his life called it that at the time. Jonathan's family was well acquainted with his symptoms – which included intense motor “tics,” outbursts of anger, and depressive tendencies – but they barely suspected that these might be signs of a recognized medical condition.

“They just thought I was a difficult child,” Jonathan says. “And boy, did I ever catch flack for my ‘misbehavior.’”

He recalls frequent quarrels with his parents and siblings – animated shouting matches spurred on by his feeling misunderstood, inevitably resulting in further feelings of rejection and alienation. “The more unheard and wrongly accused I felt, the angrier I got. I think I was largely acting out in order to draw attention to an unmet emotional need.” That need? “I simply wanted a little compassion: I wanted my family to recognize, accept, and forgive me for my complicated-ness.”

These “complications” continued to plague Jonathan for years. Lacking a better explanation, he came to understand his difficulties as a failing on his part; a character flaw. “I felt weak – everyone around me seemed to be handling life more gracefully. And their message to me, as I perceived it anyway, was that I was solely at fault for my shortcomings.”

It wasn't until halfway through college that Jonathan started to get different answers. In college, he was diagnosed variously with ADHD, depression, and obsessive-compulsive disorder. His health care providers, however, offered no common explanation for these different problems. Finally, at age 24, Jonathan was formally diagnosed with Tourette Syndrome, a condition believed to be at least partly genetic in origin, and commonly producing a whole range of mental health issues – including all of the ones Jonathan had exhibited. At last, he could make some sense of why he had struggled for so long.

“Getting the diagnosis didn't automatically fix everything,” Jonathan

says – treatment options for Tourette Syndrome are still very limited – “but at least morally speaking, I could begin to stop blaming myself.”

Another ten years have passed since Jonathan's ultimate diagnosis, and many symptoms persist. But to this day, the most challenging aspect of coping with his mental disorder has been the stigma and discrimination he's encountered.

“People don't understand what I go through with this. Learning that I have something called ‘Tourette Syndrome’ doesn't necessarily help; it's usually just a label in their mind” – a label which can feed prejudice just as readily

“Getting the diagnosis didn't automatically fix everything, but at least morally speaking, I could begin to stop blaming myself.”

as promote compassion. “I am very reluctant in most cases to tell people about my mental illness. I can see their attitudes toward me shift as soon as I speak the taboo term: I get sorted into the ‘stay away from him – he's crazy’ category, and their interactions with me change.”

The specter of stigma can make one feel paranoid and isolated, Jonathan adds. He confesses that more frequent than overt prejudicial treatment from others are his own fears of being perceived and treated differently due to his mental illness. This anxiety routinely leads him to avoid social situations, continually put off pursuing his vocational dream of becoming a teacher, and even steer clear of romantic involvement.

“I have found ways to cope with mental illness and even rise above

these challenges,” he says. “But I won't pretend that it hasn't been terribly difficult living with a condition that I feel I have to hide from friends and coworkers. There's always the very real possibility of social rejection and workplace discrimination. In a way, the stigma is actually worse than the illness itself.”

Mental illness in America is no fringe issue. The number of people it affects is staggering. This year, according to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), an estimated 44 million Americans will experience diagnosable mental disorders, ranging from chronic depression and anxiety to bipolar disorder and schizophrenia.

The problem of mental illness is as serious as it is widespread. According to SAMHSA, depression is the leading cause of disability in the U.S., affecting 19 million individuals annually. Also in a typical year, 35,000 Americans will commit suicide – which often is connected with serious mental illness – while over a million more will attempt it. These numbers have enormous social and economic consequences

as well as personal ones.

Treatment of mental illness can be highly effective. With the proper medical attention and community support – including support from loved ones – individuals with a history of mental illness can often lead normal and successful lives. For Jonathan, the long journey toward wellness has led to deep personal growth and strengthened bonds with family and friends.

“I feel extremely fortunate to have received the help that I did,” he says. “I couldn't have come to where I am now without that care. In fact, I may not have survived to tell this story.” Jonathan's treatment regimen over the years has included counseling, medications, and a devoted meditation practice. Together, they have made a huge difference in his life.

The problem is, not everyone has been as lucky as Jonathan. Two out of every three people in this country who have a diagnosable mental disorder do not even seek treatment. Why is that?

A big part of the answer is – again – social attitudes about mental illness. At the end of the day, the typical individual experiencing mental health problems feels too ashamed about his or her condition to seek help, does not have the knowledge to recognize his or her condition, or doesn't believe that help exists. According to SAMHSA, only one in four young adults between the ages of 18 and 24 believes that a person with mental illness can eventually recover. And only one in four Americans “agrees that people are generally caring and sympathetic toward individuals with mental illnesses.” The cards are heavily stacked against seeking help.

Inaccurate prejudices about the nature and appropriate handling of mental illness are so pervasive, and so deeply ingrained in America's collective psyche, that no one is immune to their influence. We encounter harmful stereotypes and limiting representations of the mentally ill on television and the Internet, in our newspapers, and in our schools. Unless educated otherwise, we unconsciously pass on these stereotypes to everyone in our sphere of influence, through the language we use and the choices we make in our private and professional lives. These widely-circulating notions not only lead to damaged self-worth and social isolation for victims of mental illness. They can, and often do, result in very real discriminatory practices – the denial of jobs, housing, health insurance, and medical treatment to individuals who are viewed as a danger, menace, or liability because of their condition.

Undoing these pervasive attitudes will take strong efforts on many fronts, says Bob Nassauer of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Washtenaw County. One key area is better early screening protocols for mental illness. Far too often, family physicians treat the symptoms of mental illness – pain and lethargy, for instance – but fail to address their root cause or suggest the patient meet with a specialist such as a psychiatrist and/or social worker. “When our society has addressed the

see STIGMA, page 11

A man of many interests creates quick and effective "Decadome"

by Susan Beckett
Publisher

They say we are all connected by six degrees of separation or less, but those who have been in Ann Arbor for a while almost certainly know someone who knows Eric Lipson. Perhaps they encountered this long-time resident while he ran Recycle Ann Arbor's Re-use Center, or when he was the administrator for Temple Beth Emeth (TBE), or in his most recent incarnation as director of the Inter-Cooperative Council (ICC), the U-M student housing co-op. He might have been spotted on cable television, sporting his red reading glasses while volunteering as a planning commissioner, with Michigan Peaceworks protesting the invasion of Iraq, or speaking out against the construction of a conference center in Ann Arbor. You might remember him as the guy who erected a domed structure on Liberty Square the day after a man died there of exposure.

A passion for justice, community service, deep and lasting relationships, and simple but elegant solutions are recurring themes in Eric Lipson's life. Eric arrived at the U-M Law School 1972, worked for the Southeast Michigan Transportation Authority (SEMTA, now known as SMART) during a hiatus, and graduated in 1977 with a social justice outlook, taking many courses in environmental law taught by famed professor Joe Sax. Working at Bivouac, and as a teaching fellow at Alice Lloyd residence hall during the school year and at Camp Tamarack and other Fresh Air Society camps in the summers, Eric was able to pay the then-reasonable cost of law school and graduate debt-free. In 1980, he accepted a \$15,000 dollar per year job with the University of Michigan Student Legal Services, where cases were accepted based on their merit, not on clients' ability to pay.

Eric built passive-solar-heated timber-frame houses for Don Price and Associates while he studied for the Bar Exam, an endeavor he found deeply satisfying. He credits his summer camp jobs and work at his Dad's Woodward

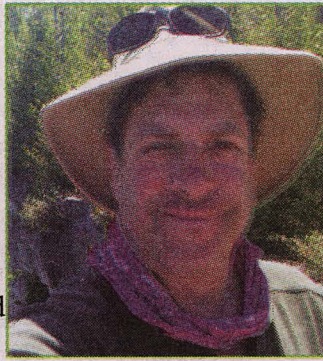
Coney Island restaurant with teaching him many of the people skills he relies on today, along with a litany of other skills he has employed through the years.

"I had some amazing mentors," Eric chirrups. "My parents and grandparents; also Margaret Peschel, my science teacher at Pasteur elementary school in Detroit, Mr. Allen Brown, who built Camp Tamarack from the ground up, and Gordy Levenson, an amazing naturalist and teacher."

In the late 1970s, because of his construction experience and some experimentation Eric had done with building geodesic domes (invented by Buckminster Fuller), his friend Bill Middleton asked him to evaluate a construction system devised by Fred Golden. Eric was very impressed with Fred's system. It simplified building construction by using panels continuously connected along their edges by connectors, thereby reducing the number of parts and steps involved from thousands to mere dozens, and thus shortened construction time from days or weeks to hours.

The three men worked together and developed the Decadome™, consisting of 10 walls and a roof, all built from identical panels and connectors that can be assembled with hand tools in an hour. Unlike geodesic domes, the walls are vertical, and can accommodate standard windows and doors. They tried to market it, but the unconventional shape made it a tough sell.

In conjunction with the Ann Arbor Homeless Action Committee, they erected a dome at Liberty Plaza on a winter's day where a homeless man had frozen to death earlier that very morning. They put up another dome at the "Little Park for a Little While" that was briefly a homeless encampment and is now the County Building Annex at Main and Ann Streets. The homeless protestors thought the dome was a significant improvement over tents. Much to Eric's dismay, the dome was taken over by the meanest and toughest



of the park inhabitants.

Eric was also instrumental in establishing a group that since 1971 has preserved 100 acres of Ontario conservation land on the Bruce Peninsula's Niagara escarpment. In another twist on networking, the son of a group member, who was a conservator at Henry Ford Museum, suggested that Eric assemble a dome at the museum. That exhibit eventually led to a sale to Greenfield Village for storing the parts of an historic sugar mill.

Though Fred and Bill left the dome venture to develop other businesses, Eric continued to work on Decadomes, even as he worked full time in other capacities. Eventually this led to one of the highlights of his life: meeting and working with Nobel Peace Prize winner-to-be, Muhammad Yunus. Lipson saw tremendous potential for the units in disaster relief. Insulated, strong, aerodynamically sound, durable and lockable, they were vastly superior to tents, and might even prove to be superior permanent housing in Bangladesh, where natural disasters are frequent.

Professor Yunus came to Ann Arbor in 1998, spreading his message of the power of microcredit. A friend of Eric's, who was sponsoring Yunus talk through RESULTS (a non-profit poverty alleviation organization), asked him to pick up Yunus from the airport, and on the way to the speaking engagement, Eric told him about the domes. Yunus encouraged Eric to show him one and was so impressed he asked for a shipment of a dozen domes for a trial in Bangladesh. Because the components of the Decadomes™ stack flat and are easy to ship, the entire



Left: Eric Lipson; Above: One of his Decadomes in Liberty Plaza; Below: Decadome with windows and doors. To see how easily the Decadome is constructed, search Youtube for "decadome demonstration" or visit www.decadome.com.



shipment took only two pallets in a shipping container. Eric went to Dhaka to personally oversee the installation of the units. The domes proved durable, but the people of Bangladesh were used to square shelters and the cultural barriers hindered their adoption as permanent housing.

Eric and his wife, Lorene, returned to Ann Arbor in 1990 and Eric took a half-time job as an administrator at TBE so that he could continue developing the domes and be a stay-at-home dad. Lorene, one of only a handful of full-time archeological illustrators in the entire U.S., worked at the Kelsey Museum of Archaeology. Their son, Joe, was born in 1993, and Eric stayed home with him, too, doing freelance legal work. Watching fearfully as cars sped past their home while children played a few feet away in the yard, Eric started advocating for traffic calming by installing speed control humps. After many petition drives and meetings, humps were installed on his street and many others since, allowing him peace of mind about his youngest

see DECADOME, page 10

Mark's Carts bring hip, urban fare to streets of Ann Arbor

Any day now, a downtown outdoor food cart garden in Ann Arbor will offer gourmet street food ranging from breakfast burritos to pulled pork sandwiches to vegan treats.

With the warmer weather has come stepped-up construction on what is poised to become Ann Arbor's premier street food scene. Workers are currently installing utilities and pouring concrete in the West Washington lot that will house up to 10 food carts and a covered eating area. At the same time, work on a new commercial kitchen adjacent to the cart garden is in its final stages. Mark Hodesh, owner of Downtown Home and Garden and originator of the cart garden, is eager to see the project launch this spring.

"I am really pleased with how construction is shaping up," said Hodesh. "At this pace, we will greet the spring by offering the community a wonderful new street food scene and

attractive, affordable options for downtown dining."

So far there are six food carts signed up for the cart garden. Hodesh is still accepting applications to fill the final four spots. Confirmed vendors at present include: San Street (Asian street food); Debajo del Sol (Spanish paella and tapas); The Lunch Room (vegan entrees, sides and baked goods); eat (locally sourced hearty sandwiches); Darcy's Cart (breakfast burritos and more); and Humble Hogs (hoagies, braise-in-a bun, and other savory and sweet offerings). Hodesh encourages other potential food cart operators to contact him. He is especially seeking vendors of Indian food, Jamaican food, and wood-fired pizza.

The idea for the food carts originated when Hodesh visited his daughter Jeanne in New York City last year.



This is not your father's food cart. A wide variety of unique, fresh, and locally sourced food will be featured at Mark's Carts, opening this spring behind Downtown Home and Garden

Impressed with the breadth of street food available there and the joyful, entrepreneurial spirit of the people running the carts, Hodesh decided to bring the concept home. Hodesh notes that Mark's Carts also has an interesting historical connection: it is located on West Washington between Ashley Street and First Street, on the

site of the former home of Herman Hertler. Hertler was one of the founders of Hertler Bros., the business that Hodesh bought in 1975 which is now Downtown Home and Garden.

A date for the cart garden opening will be announced soon, as construction progresses.

And that man is...

by Martin Stolzenberg
Groundcover Contributor

As adolescents in the nineteen fifties, we started out on the same Jewish Community Center basketball team. I was pretty good. He was excellent. Soon he was big and powerful. He could dunk, which was a rarity in those days for someone who was maybe 6'2". We worked our way up to the high school team. He was a star; I sat on the bench. One day there was no practice and we wound up, just the two of us, at the gym of a local church. We spent the whole afternoon going one-on-one. Cooling off between games he said, "If I could shoot like you or you could jump like me, it would make one hell of a player." I guess it meant a lot to me, because I never forgot the words that he said to me that day.

I think it was that same day that we compared the size of our hands. Understand: I have large hands, wearing extra-large gloves. When we lined up our hands I could see that his was the equivalent of about a joint larger than mine. The largest hand I had ever seen.

He went off to the University of Cincinnati on a basketball scholarship. I bumped into him during a Christmas break. He

told me he was now playing baseball and the Pirates, Cincinnati Reds, and the Dodgers were interested in him, as a pitcher. I condescendingly said, "Sure," and "Good luck." I even went around the neighborhood telling everyone, "He thinks he is going to get signed to a baseball bonus contract by one of the major league teams. That means he has to go on the twenty-five man roster. What is he thinking?"

He became a big star for the Los Angeles Dodgers. My wife Gale and I were living in the Pittsburgh area. I mentioned at dinner with my boss, that I knew him from the neighborhood. His wife heard and became ecstatic. They had lived in Los Angeles. She loved the Dodgers, especially him. Could she meet him? I said I would try. I knew the visiting teams stayed at the downtown Hilton when they were in Pittsburgh. One night, when the Dodgers were in town, I called. Sure enough I was connected to his room. We reminisced a bit about what happened to whom. He asked if I was married. When he heard that I was indeed married he told me that he "would like to meet a nice Jewish girl." I don't think he did.

see LEGENDARY, page 11

40th anniversary

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1		7	4	2				
4		5				9		6
	8				5			
3							1	7
				8				
7	2							5
			8				4	
5		4			8			2
				3	4	5		9

Fill in the squares so that each row, column, and 3-by-3 box contain the numbers 1 through 9.

- ACROSS**
- Skewer
 - Boutiques
 - Eagle
 - Silly
 - Uncanny
 - Partially submerged river valley
 - "The interesting thing about being a mother is that everyone wants pets, but no one but me cleans the kitty litter."
 - Gymnast's requisite
 - Pius _____, Pope from 1939-1958
 - Evil
 - Hari
 - Initials of a French President
 - Terminated
 - Conspiracy
 - _____ and now
 - Blunder
 - Fire (prefix)
 - Symbols
 - Top floor
 - Mom's title (abbr.)
 - "Few misfortunes can befall a boy which brings worse consequences than to have a really affectionate mother."
 - Fish
 - Army rank (abbr.)
 - Conscious
 - Pathological condition
 - Walk
 - Demon
 - Edinburgh native
 - Fire byproduct
 - Polearm
 - Lawrence Kris Parker
 - Book
 - Brooks
 - Hairpiece
 - Gardner
 - "You know the passage where Scarlett voices her happiness that her mother is dead, so that she can't see what a bad girl Scarlett has become? Well, that's me."
 - Knight's title
 - Portents
 - Listlessness
 - Curse
 - Alae
 - Collision damage

- DOWN**
- Novak
 - Netherlands village
 - Slot machine symbol
 - Gem

Mothers Day quotes – Who said them?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
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23	24	25		26		27			28			
29			30		31			32				
33				34		35		36			37	38
40					41			42		43		
44				45				46		47		
		48	49				50		51		52	
53	54				55				56		57	
58					59				60		61	
62				63				64			65	66
68					69				70			
71					72					73		

- Prove false
- Matching items
- "A good mother is worth hundreds of schoolmasters."
- Mountain nymph
- Dappled
- Month (abbr.)
- "Who in their infinite wisdom decreed that Little League uniforms be white? Certainly not a mother."
- Cowboy's rope
- Pertaining to birth
- Trigonometric function
- Disfigure
- Ape
- Beverage
- "My mother loved children - she would have given anything if I had been one."
- Serious story
- Oscillation
- University department (abbr.)
- Zadora
- Quiver
- Ideas in common
- Gossip tidbit
- Numerical data
- Wonderment
- Photo cards (abbr.)
- "An ounce of mother is worth a pound of clergy."
- Presidential nickname
- Chess piece
- Put away
- Film
- Number
- Made angry
- Rogers
- Hackman
- Promise
- Feminine suffix
- Traveler's haven
- Intestine
- Pronoun

Puzzle by Jeff Richmond

Solutions on page 9

"VWVBZ XIPAVB GE OGSV XIEVE. EAV LIVE YIP

VYPVB PAV MBIXGEVL OQYL. EAV MBVMQBVE

Q UIBOL EAV UGOO YIP EVV?"

- MIMV MQRO WG

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- I agree not to sell additional goods or products when selling the paper or to panhandle, including panhandling with only one paper.
- I will wear and display my badge when selling papers.
- I will only purchase the paper from Groundcover News Staff and will

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- I understand that I am not a legal employee of Groundcover News but a contracted worker responsible for my own well-being and income.
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Book Reviews

THIS TIME IS DIFFERENT: Eight Centuries of Financial Folly by Carmen M. Reinhart and Kenneth S. Rogoff
c. 2009 by Princeton University Press

by David KE Dodge
Groundcover Contributor

THIS TIME IS DIFFERENT is a tome dense with statistics, tables and graphs, many of which escaped this reviewer's comprehension. Almost every page also contains sentences that were beyond his comprehension, leading him to the realization that he sorely needed a refresher college-level statistics course to appreciate the text, and, probably, to develop a constructive understanding of the world of economic affairs.

But his eyes pored over every sentence, and he finished the book

glad that he had plowed through. He came away with three distinct impressions:

The world is in its infancy, so far as national and international financial and political institutions and economic, currency, and trade conventions are concerned. No one has developed a model of national and international flows of wealth, debt, and currency enabling world leaders to foresee, and make correction to forestall, financial crises such as that which germinated in the United States, quickly engulfed the world in 2008, and from which the world has yet to recover.

The information necessary to develop and operate such a model is



not available—not from governments, banks, corporations, or individual consumers. Without full disclosure and transparency on the part of all

participants, a model will never be developed, much less effectively used, to avoid collapses of the economies of large portions of the world.

The necessary transparency on the part of all participants in an economy, the collection of statistics therefrom, and the development and application of a model reliant on such statistics so as to modify policy and forestall crisis, requires a higher quality of citizenship and statesmanship than may ever be realized.

It is this reviewer's opinion that if the world does not develop such leadership, the people of the world can expect to reel from crisis to crisis. Pretty much, so long as the U.S. remains the dominant world economy and military power, the choice belongs to the people of the U.S. to make.

The reviewer fears he may have discouraged the reader from undertaking THIS TIME IS DIFFERENT. The reader is encouraged to read the Preface, the Preamble, and chapter 17, the last chapter. She or he may then be motivated to try the denser material in the book, in order to better understand the complexity of the issues addressed. Even the authors suggest, in the preface, that the reader might find Part V, chapters 13-16, to be "relatively straightforward and self-contained."

WE ARE THE LEADERS WE HAVE BEEN LOOKING FOR: by Grace Lee Boggs with Scott Kurishage

by Karen L. Totten
Groundcover Contributor

"What does it mean to be a human being in the 21st century?" This question, posed by Grace Lee Boggs and repeated by Danny Glover in his introductory remarks to Boggs' book *The Next American Revolution*, is the central focus of a powerful treatise on human relationships that Glover says "we must have and are destined to have for the survival of the human race and the planet itself."

Grace Lee Boggs, the distinguished

96-year-old activist and longtime Detroit resident sees America as increasingly corrupted by crass materialism, and becoming increasingly racist. In addition, the profitability of militarism is muddying the dream of democracy for all; she recalls Martin Luther King, Jr.'s call for a "revolution of values" against these giant triplets.

Many of us think of revolution in bloody terms, as in the case of the French Revolution, or the Bolshevik Revolution. But this is not the sort of thing Boggs has in mind. Gone is the notion of simply replacing one power group with another, leaving the people still at the mercy of those who rule to save us from what ails in society. Instead, Boggs embraces a community-based, self-directed brand of activism. In

fact, she says, we are the leaders we are looking for. We have it within ourselves to begin making the kinds of choices and decisions which will bring about grass-roots change.

What Boggs sets out here is not simply rebellion. She feels that those who care about transforming society need to stop thinking of themselves as victims, either of greed or corruption. Boggs feels marginalization can be a liberating concept since it takes one to a place where maintaining the status quo is no longer an option, and therefore new forms of self-governing can evolve. Each of us, Boggs asserts, needs to undergo the kind of philosophical and spiritual transformation that will recognize our interconnectedness, nurture our

compassion, and grow our souls at a time when the world desperately needs new visions of how to live.

Boggs draws her ideas from her lifelong experience in activism, and her understanding of the current political, economic and environmental landscape. She believes two of the ways we can accomplish this new dialogue and new approach to the politics of our time are through work that "fosters cooperation rather than competition and which preserves rather than destroys skills," and through re-envisioned education. As Gandhi would say, education for head, heart and hands, education, the goal of which is building community rather than creating individuals driven to see **LEADERS**, page 10

Puzzle Solutions

Cryptoquote

"Every mother is like Moses.
She does not enter the
promised land. She prepares a
world she will not see."

- Pope Paul VI

K	A	B	O	B		S	H	O	P	S		E	R	N	
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6	4	1	5	8	7	2	9	3
7	2	9	6	1	3	4	8	5
9	6	3	8	5	2	7	4	1
5	7	4	9	6	1	8	3	2
8	1	2	7	3	4	5	6	9

Decadome could provide quick shelter to people in disaster areas

continued from page 6

child, Rebecca.

Eric's efforts caught the eye of Mayor Hieftje, who subsequently appointed him to the Planning Commission, where he served for about four years. During this time, he challenged Marcia Higgins, the current 4th Ward council member, for the Democratic candidacy for City Council. He lost the primary by a mere 60 votes.

In 1997, the director of Recycle Ann Arbor's Re-Use Center was promoted, and RAA snatched up Eric, a frequenter of the facility, as its new director. He recalls with gusto the invitations to dismantle old buildings. They rescued stained and beveled glass windows, antique doors and 1920s-era hardware

from a former old-age home for nuns in Monroe.

"That job was like treasure hunting. One day we got all sorts of wedding presents still in their boxes. There was obviously a story there, but it probably wasn't a good one."

At his 50th birthday party, attorney John Shea, a well-respected criminal defense attorney for whom Eric had done some earlier work, asked Eric to join his practice. The physical strain of working at the Re-use center was punishing. His wife urged him to accept the law job, and he did.

Being a criminal defense lawyer, people often asked, "How can you represent

'those people'?" His response: "Many of 'those people' are innocent. Even if they are guilty, you want to give them the best defense possible since the guilty people are usually convicted, and if they have had a proper defense, there is no room for a successful appeal. And for some reason, people assume that all our clients are guilty. In my experience, many of the clients who came to us were innocent, and those people could be you!"

Despite the satisfaction of helping free the innocent (and plea-bargain for the guilty), Lipson yearned to work in a field that did not deal with pathological behavior. He took his current position as General Manager of the ICC – the student housing coop – in 2007, and

calls it the most challenging job he has ever had, and one that employs all his myriad skills. The oldest student-owned and operated housing co-op in the U.S., the ICC has 20 buildings and more than 500 members. Eric settles disputes, oversees repairs, and maintains government compliance and full occupancy rates.

And Eric hasn't given up on his dream of sending thousands of Decadomes™ to those who need housing after disasters such as in Haiti and Japan. "These buildings work like a charm. Someday I still believe we'll be able to employ Michiganders by manufacturing Decadomes™ and sending them all over the world to people who need them."

Leaders must change their methods of leading

continued from page 9

increase their status and earning potential.

Boggs argues for a paradigm shift in education so that not only is it a base from which one prepares for life in industrialized society, but it acts as a force which honors the "unique ability of human beings to shape and create reality in accordance with conscious purposes and plans." The factory model of education is obsolete, she says, and must be replaced with a program which honors children's creative powers and the new ways by which they learn.

Boggs states, "Instead of rhetorical flourishes against 'socialism' [such as the Tea Party currently offer] we need active and working declarations of our commitment to creating local economies based on new principles and ethics of real work." Economic development does not come only from outside, as politicians declare. Instead, "what actually holds the fabric our society together are

local activities not done for money" such as raising children, cooking, bartering with friends and neighbors for services or goods, co-operative enterprises based on common ownership and control" – in short, "a community of self-reliance with an economy rooted in human solidarity rather than amoral competition," Boggs writes.

Boggs' call for grassroots change means that we must become midwives for the birthing of a new America, as movement elder Vincent Harding has stated. We must look to new models for leadership, shifting away from the vertical, charisma dominated patterns of the past and looking to more participatory and horizontal kinds of leadership as we might witness within a family. "We are not subversives," Boggs states, but people who are making the leap forward in the "precious human qualities of social responsibility and creativity now necessary and possible in the evolution of the human species. We are struggling to change the country because we love it."



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Surf for news with a fresh perspective

by Karen L. Totten
Groundcover Contributor

Looking for news on the Internet? Something more than what the big three networks or cable news can offer? Here are a few sites I enjoy looking at, because I can get information that other traditional news sources do not explore or cover only in brief.

Aljazeera.net. Hit the "English" button. Honest, straightforward. Their interviewers ask tough questions. Some of the more interesting programs include Empire, Riz Khan and Inside Story. These news programs are also available on Youtube.com after a lag of a day or so. On the Aljazeera channel you can watch the news of the day.

www.democracynow.org. They boast the great Amy Goodman, a journalist who tirelessly questions, even when, as it did this year, it led to her being prevented from entering Canada to

follow a story. Goodman hosts a radio show and her guests range the gamut. On the down side, the site does not update over weekends.

www.michaelmoore.com. Yes, I know he's opinionated. But his site tracks the list of dead and wounded in Iraq and Afghanistan, features links to places where one can get involved in constructive political and social movements and community service, and Michael's blogs make for great conversation starters.

www.propublica.org. Pulitzer prize-winning journalists cover topics other media sources have forgotten or simply ignore. They put together a spectacular series on Katrina and its aftermath, as well as one on the state of dialysis in the United States. As this was written, their site listed articles on the denial of Purple Hearts to brain damaged veterans, the Mideast situation, and the Bailout, among other things.

Salon.com. Mostly for the columns of Glen Greenwald, a former constitutional lawyer now author who can dissect a subject and offer proof for his argument like nobody else.

Other sites that tantalize the mind and stimulate thought:

www.pbs.org. Especially Bill Moyers Journal. Though Moyers is no longer doing his wonderful show, you can still see old episodes. One not to be missed is an interview with historian Simon Schama, in January of 2009. Schama, who has written about everything historical from the French Revolution to the passage of slaves into the U.S. and the slave trade's subsequent influence on American politics, is an animated and articulate guest, keeping the cameramen on their toes, as he engagingly expresses his erudite views.

www.ted.com. A tremendous site,

featuring lectures from thinkers, visionaries, scientists, authors, etc. One lecture I really appreciate is by J.K. Rowling, as the speaker at Harvard graduation. She speaks not only of her transformation from impoverished single mother to award-winning author, but also of her choices along the way and how she studied what she loved instead of studying what would bring a top salary. Her description of her work with Amnesty International is compelling.

www.loc.gov/poetry/180/ There are many great sites for lovers of poetry, but what I like about this particular one is the accessibility of the poems (selected primarily for a teenage audience—one for each school day) and the simplicity of presentation. Essentially a big, long list of well-known and lesser-known poets. Some poems do change from time to time. My favorites: Hand Shadows, by Mary Cornish and #56.

Legendary ball player has connections with Groundcover writer

continued from page 7

I also told him we were going to be at the game the next night. He suggested that before the game started, I lean over the side of the dugout and tell the bat boy that I was a friend and wanted to speak to him. He would come in from the bullpen. We got caught in traffic coming to the ballpark; the game was already underway and we missed seeing him.

After that, word came back that a number of fellows from the old neighborhood had gone to school in California and continued to live in the Los Angeles area. Every Sunday morning they met for a pickup basketball game in one of the neighborhood parks. At the height of his career he started show-

ing up, but it caused a problem. Why? Because once the neighborhood kids realized who was there, they started milling around for his autograph. It disrupted the basketball game. After a while the boys tossed the biggest star in baseball from the game and told him not to come back. Celebrity status does not get you too far with the Brooklyn crowd.

It was about this time that my young nephew, Brian, became enthralled when I exaggerated a little bit about my childhood friendship with the baseball star. One day, Brian came up with the bright idea that I should write to him to get him to send an autographed picture. I started back-tracking, but it was too late. Eventually, we wrote to the Los Angeles Dodgers, Chavez Ravine, Los

Angeles, California.

Relentlessly, for the next several months, Brian grilled me about when the picture was coming. I would make excuses. My stock was plummeting.

Then, one weekday afternoon, when I was at work, Gale called. "You won't believe it, but he sent us an autographed picture addressed specifically to Brian along with a baseball signed by the whole Dodger team!"

That was huge because the Dodgers had won the World Series that year. I immediately took the rest of the afternoon off to go see the baseball. My stock soared. My nephew treasured that baseball for many years. Every once in a while we take it out of its drawer and identify the

faded names of players.

Many years later, I showed my son Sandy Koufax's plaque in the Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown. I told him how we had played basketball together in Brooklyn. So much for my prognostication abilities.

I guess the only one more foolish than me was the Lafayette High School baseball coach, George Sheehan. He had Koufax play first base, a .200 hitter, and used Fred Wilpon, now owner of the New York Mets, as his primary pitcher. That was some talent assessment! It is said that Sandy Koufax could throw a great curve ball because his very large fingers enabled him to hold the ball in his hand for a long time. I will testify to that.

Stigma is sad fact of misunderstanding mental illness

continued from page 5

issue of stigma and discrimination," Nassauer says, "then having a high quality mental health screen would become accepted standard procedure—especially for young people."

Another key need is better treatments. Nassauer believes "the current mental health system may be too short-term focused and reliant on medications." A growing body of literature is calling into question the long-term effectiveness of many psychiatric drugs, including antidepressants and anti-psychotics. This

research has even raised the "disturbing possibility that some of these meds can, for some, worsen their condition." Integrative approaches to mental illness that include non-medication components, such as talk therapy, outdoor exercise, nutrition, brain exercises, and mindfulness techniques, might prove more effective in the long run. In the end, however, effective treatment may still largely come down to the attitudes of a community. "Perhaps a big part of the solution," says Nassauer, "is simply to give people adequate time in a safe, respectful,

beautiful and compassionate place so they can heal."

Maybe most importantly, mental health issues in our society desperately need more positive attention—from the educational establishments as well as from the media.

In Jonathan's words, "In my experience, awareness is the best antidote to stigma and discrimination. The better society understands mental illness, the more likely people like me will get the care and the community support they need

to achieve their dreams."

Until that glorious day arrives when mental illness is no longer misunderstood, individuals experiencing symptoms of serious mental disorders are still advised to seek professional help, by taking advantage of existing mental health services in their community.

"While it may be wise and prudent to keep your illness private, it is still important to get treatment," says Nassauer.

Water Hill Music Fest displays talents of friends and neighbors

by Laurie Lounsbury
Editor

For Paul Tinkerhess, an avid musician who enjoys walking around his neighborhood, it was an idea he had fostered for years and whose time had come.

"As a musician I've come to know other musicians who live in the neighborhood and as a walker I've spent many pleasant hours walking Water Hill up, down, and sideways," said Tinkerhess, organizer of the Water Hill Music Fest. Knowing that life is short and good ideas sometimes drift away on the stream of daily living, Tinkerhess decided that May Day of this year was the perfect day to host a music festival.

This music festival is particularly unique because the venue is an entire neighborhood, and the musicians will be performing on their own front porches or yards. Neighbors and visitors can stroll through the 'hood and see the likes of Ann Arbor music legends George Bedard, Brian Delaney, and Dick Siegel playing up the walk from jazz icons like Vincent York, who played with Duke Ellington, and Ron Brooks, who has recorded with Quincy Jones.

You may round a corner after hearing John Madison, principal violist for the Michigan Opera Theater Orchestra, and stumble upon a rising young star like seven-year-old Markey playing her cello.

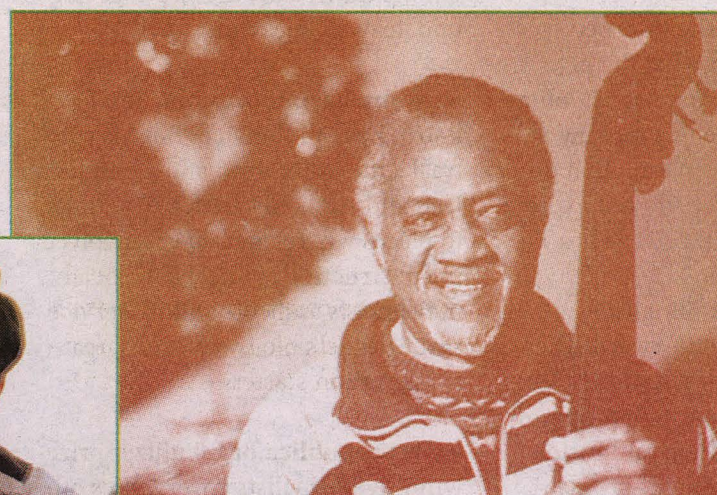
"The concept is simple," Tinkerhess said. "On the afternoon of Sunday, May 1st, everyone in the neighborhood who either is a musician or wants to pretend to be a musician is encouraged to step out onto their front porch and play music. That's it. Or half of it. The other half is that we are inviting all the other neighbors, and the rest of the world, to wander through the neighborhood that afternoon and enjoy something like a music festival with a lot of stages."

Given the number of musicians in the neighborhood, outside visitors will be needed to ensure not everyone is sitting on a front porch performing. Tinkerhess reported that 140

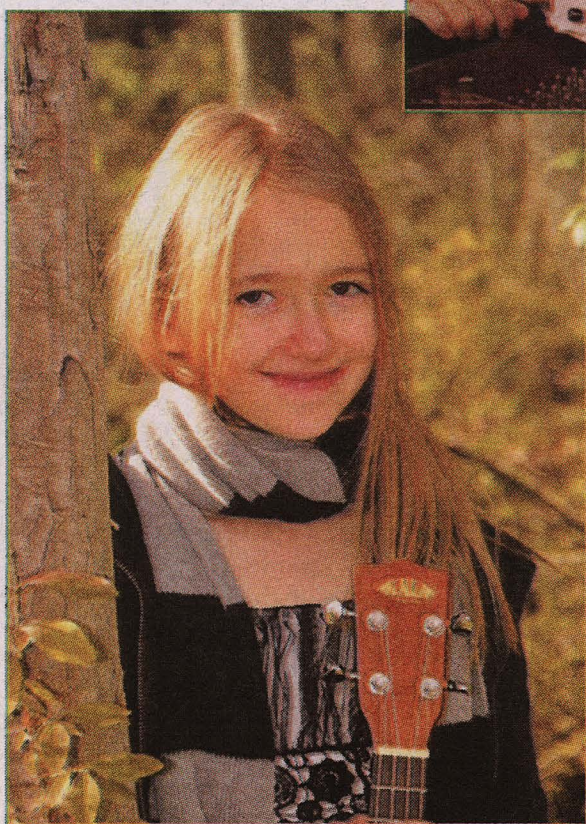
neighborhood musicians had signed up by April 25.

You'll know you're in the right location for the festival by the street names – Brooks, Spring, Fountain, Summit – the neighborhood on Ann Arbor's near north side is flooded with streets named for water running nearby or the hilltop they border.

Ann Arbor Observer editor John Hilton said the Water Hill Music Fest was the



From left: 10-year-old Magdalen Fossum, named one of the two best open mic performers at the Ark; Waleed Howrani, world-renowned composer and pianist; and Ron Brooks, bassist who has performed with Quincy Jones, Sarah Vaughan and Bob James. He'll be performing on Water Hill with his trio, comprised of Brooks with Pete Siers, Tadd Weed.



"coolest idea of 2011."

"The response has been universally positive, and more enthusiastic than I had even hoped for," Tinkerhess said. "People don't just think it's a good idea, they think it's a fantastic idea."

And how does Tinkerhess account for all the musical talent to be found in one neighborhood?

"It must be something in the water," he said.

Water Hill Music Festival will be from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. Sunday, May 1, in the neighborhood bounded by Brooks, Miller, Spring and Summit streets.

For more information and an event program, visit www.waterhill.org

Why we celebrate Cinco de Mayo

by Carolyn Lusch
Groundcover Contributor

On May 5th, or Cinco de Mayo, many communities hold celebrations of Mexican culture and heritage.

Cinco de Mayo commemorates the Battle of Puebla, which occurred in 1862. The French army had invaded Mexico because of owed debt, and during this battle a small militia under General Ignacio Zaragoza Seguin defeated Napoleon's forces, which were considered among the most powerful in the world.

The outcome of the Battle of Puebla was an extraordinary achievement and gave the Mexican citizens a great sense of patriotism. Cinco de Mayo still marks this battle as a symbol of pride and unity, and in some interpretations as defiance against imperialism.

In Mexico itself, this holiday is mostly only celebrated in Puebla. However, it has become more and more widespread among Mexican communities in the United States. Here it is a way of displaying cultural

pride and celebrating success against odds, and has also served as an opportunity for many people to learn about Mexican heritage and history.

It has been further spread both by those seeking understanding and unity between cultures and by commercial interests. Celebrations take place in several large cities, and often involve traditional dancing, music and food.

Piñatas, Mexican flags and homemade tortillas are already flying off the shelves at Ann Arbor's well stocked Tienda La Libertad. Owner Ana Trinidad said, "In Mexico we celebrate with the flag, retelling the story, preserving memories, and having a barbeque with our families. Many people come here to get the special drinks, cheeses, and homemade baked goods for their parties."

A group of California State University students originated the celebration of Cinco De Mayo in the U.S. in 1967, responding to the lack of a Chicano holiday.